GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6623
ANSWERED ON:10.05.2005
TELECAST RIGHT OF CRICKET MATCH TO PRASAR BHARTI
Khandelwal Shri Vijay Kumar

Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Board of Cricket Control of India has handed over rights of direct telecast of cricket matches to Prasar Bharti;

(b) if so, whether the Government has taken any stance in regard to the guidelines issued and rulings given in judicial cases in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government proposes to formulate any policy framework in this regard;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI SUNIL DUTT)

(a) As per information given by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), `Over the last decade they had always invited parties having sports channels to furnish their offers for television rights of the cricket matches in India. After discussion and negotiations, the rights were granted to the most suitable party. Besides the financial considerations, other considerations were also taken into account such as quality of production and equipment, number of cameras, experience of producer/director and so on. In 2004, it was time to grant the TV rights afresh. BCCI thought that open tender could invite better competition and provide opportunities to many`. As further informed by BCCI, however, after the tendering process, the matter became sub-judice. Further, `Since Australia and South Africa were due to tour India in October-November, 2004 followed by Pakistan in March-April, 2005, and time was running out, the world body of cricket, International Cricket Council (ICC) said that the tours would have to be called off unless there was television coverage. With the leave of the Court, BCCI granted the terrestrial rights of the matches for all the series to Prasar Bharti and the overseas rights to other channel`.

(b) & (c): The National Sports Federations (NSFs) are autonomous bodies registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860, Recently in a Writ Petition No.541 of 2004 filed by M/s Zee Telefilms Ltd. before the Hon`ble Supreme Court of India, on the issue of telecasting rights, Hon`ble Supreme Court has held that BCCI is not a `State` under Article 12 of the Constitution.

(d) No such policy framework is under consideration of this Ministry.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) Does not arise.